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NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Delegations

Subject: Draft Council conclusions on the European Research Area Roadmap
2015-2020

Delegations will find attached draft Council conclusions on the European Research Area Roadmap 2015-2020 with a view to the discussion by the Research Working Party at its meeting on 27 April 2015.

Changes to doc. 7890/15 are indicated in **bold underlined** for additions and ~~striketrough~~ for deletions.

Draft Council conclusions on the European Research Area Roadmap 2015-2020

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

RECALLING

- The Conclusions of the European Council of 24-25 October 2013¹ which note the need to accelerate structural reforms of national systems and to strengthen progress monitoring based on robust data provided by Member States in view of obtaining a full European Research Area by the end of 2014;
- Its Conclusions of 21 February 2014 on the progress report from the Commission on European Research Area (ERA) 2013² which note the progress in delivering the ERA and call for the development of an ERA roadmap by mid-2015;
- Its Conclusions of 5 December 2014 on the European Research Area Progress Report 2014³ acknowledging that a good progress in delivering the ERA has been made, encouraging further efforts of the Commission, Member States and research stakeholders to make the ERA fully operational, and reaffirming its support to develop by mid-2015 an ERA roadmap at the European level,

¹ Doc. EUCO 169/13.

² Doc. 6945/14.

³ Doc. 16599/14.

1. UNDERLINES that the ERA is one of the cornerstones of the Innovation Union flagship initiative and is a crucial component of the Europe 2020 Strategy focusing on maximising the potential of Europe's research systems, fostering innovation, strengthening the scientific and technological bases of the Member States as well as their competitiveness and capacity to address grand societal challenges, and therefore REAFFIRMS its commitment to make the ERA fully operational.
- 2 REAFFIRMS the priorities for the ERA as identified in the 2012 Communication on a reinforced European Research Area Partnership **and confirmed by the Council conclusions**⁴, including the international dimension of the ERA, and RECOGNISES the start of a new phase in ~~promoting~~ **developing** of the ERA. Building on the experience of the existing ERA partnership, the Member States, the Commission and the stakeholder organisations should now ensure a fully operational ERA through coordinated efforts at the national and the EU level while ~~updating~~ **reviewing regularly and, when necessary, updating** the ERA priorities.
3. ~~WELCOMES the development [and adoption]~~ of **ENDORSES** the ERA Roadmap 2015-2020 **adopted** by the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC)⁵. In this context, ACKNOWLEDGES the importance of the work undertaken by the Member States and ERAC, in close cooperation with the Commission, and in consultation with the other ERA-related Groups and the ERA Stakeholder Platform.
4. AGREES with the approach taken by ERAC that the purpose of the ERA Roadmap is to identify a limited number of top actions **priorities** to implement the ERA priorities which will have the biggest impact on Europe's research and innovation ~~systems~~, whilst fully recognising that national research and innovation systems across Europe have different characteristics and specificities, and that it is up to the Member States to decide upon the most suited approaches for their systems.

⁴ **Doc. 17649/12.**

⁵ **Doc. 1208/15.**

5. UNDERLINES the importance of the implementation of the ERA Roadmap at the national and the EU level and INVITES the Member States and the Commission, to implement the ERA Roadmap and to integrate relevant **through appropriate** actions, where appropriate, in national **their** action plans and **or** strategies. CALLS for effective use of the Policy Support Facility in this endeavour.
6. INVITES ERAC and the ERA-related groups to propose by the end of 2015 a set of core indicators and, where appropriate, qualitative methods allowing to monitor the implementation of the ERA Roadmap. These could form part of a wider set of indicators which should be developed in collaboration between the Commission, ERAC and key stakeholders. UNDERLINES **STRESSES that the monitoring of** need to take the ERA Roadmap **should be put in the context of** into account in the monitoring associated with the future **of the** ERA progress reports and CALLS ON the Commission to consider possible integration of the monitoring of the ERA Roadmap into the ERA Progress Report 2016 and the following ERA Progress Report exercises, **in close cooperation with the Member States**, while avoiding creation of unnecessary administrative burden.
7. NOTES the need to place the ERA Roadmap in a broader strategic context of Europe's growth agenda, including the Digital Single Market (DSM) strategy and the Innovation Union. RECOGNISES that significant efforts have been undertaken by the Member States to address the ERA priorities in the context of the European Semester. The relevant ERA actions and measures, where appropriate, should be embedded in the National Reform Programmes. CALLS on the Member States and the Commission for better coherence and complementarity between all the ERA actions, including those fostering quality and excellence of the European research and innovation as well as actions promoting innovation and growth, while taking into account the need to close the research and innovation divide across the Member States and regions.

8. INVITES ERAC, **with appropriate input from relevant bodies, in particular GPC, and in close relationship** with ~~in cooperation with~~ the Strategic **configuration of the Programme** Committee of Horizon 2020, to assess the coherence of ~~the increasing number and forms of~~ joint initiatives⁶, especially those funded by the European Union, with ~~an~~ **major** emphasis on their European added value, feasibility, critical mass, complementarity and impact. **In this context, EMPHASISES that the advice of ERAC and other ERA-related groups on the identification and design of strategic priorities shall, where appropriate, be taken into consideration for the implementation of Horizon 2020.**

WITH REGARD TO THE ERA ROADMAP PRIORITIES

9. CALLS on the Member States **and the Commission** to **start the implementation of** the top action priorities identified in the ERA Roadmap:

- ~~S~~**strengthening** the evaluation of research and innovation policies and seeking complementarities between, and rationalisation of, instruments at EU and national levels;**;**
- ~~I~~**improving** alignment within and across the Joint Programming Process and the resulting initiatives (e.g. Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs)) and speeding up their implementation;**;**
- ~~M~~**making** optimal use of public investments in **Research Infrastructures (RIs)** by setting national priorities ~~eherent~~ **compatible** with the **European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI)** priorities and criteria taking full account of long term sustainability;**;**

⁶ **Joint Programming Initiatives, Articles 185 and 187, contractual PPPs, ETPs, EIPs, EIT KICs, ERA-nets, EUREKA clusters**

- ~~U~~Using open, transparent and merit based recruitment practices with regard to research positions-;
- ~~T~~ranslating national equality legislation into effective action to address gender imbalances in research institutions and decision making bodies and integrating the gender dimension better into R&D policies, programmes and projects-;
- ~~F~~ully implementing knowledge transfer policies at national level in order to maximise the dissemination, uptake and exploitation of scientific results. **Research Performing Organisations (RPOs)** and **Research Funding Organisations (RFOs)** should make knowledge transfer second nature by integrating it in their everyday work-;
- ~~P~~romoting Open access to scientific publications-;
- ~~D~~develop and implement appropriate joint strategic approaches and actions for international **Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)** cooperation on the basis of Member States' national priorities-;

through appropriate actions in their action plans or strategies by mid-2016.

~~and INVITES ERAC in cooperation with the Commission to review the progress towards the implementation of the top action priorities no later than in 2018.~~

10. HIGHLIGHTS the following POINTS FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE CONSIDERATION:

10. HIGHLIGHTS the following:

- **UNDERLINES the need to maximise the quality, effectiveness and impact of national expenditure on Research and Innovation.**
- RECALLS the need to further strengthen the Joint Programming Process (**JPP**). Within this context EMPHASISES that the transnational cooperation requires revitalisation and therefore INVITES the Member States **and the Commission** to better use the coordination instruments and develop better synergies with funding programmes at different **EU, national and regional** levels. CALLS on the Member States to better align the implementation rules and procedures **within and across the JPP and its initiatives** in order to stimulate the cooperation ~~on all levels~~ and to avoid unnecessary administrative burden.
- HIGHLIGHTS the need to step up the efforts in the area of the Research Infrastructures, **including the e-infrastructures**, and UNDERLINES that the use of the European Structural and Investment Funds for these purposes should, ~~wherever possible~~, be encouraged, **where appropriate**.
- UNDERSCORES the role of the human capital in the advancement of the ERA and the necessity to strengthen comprehensive human resources strategies ~~to strengthen regional and transnational partnerships, taking into account the importance of~~ **including** mobility of researchers, ~~including also~~ **also** from outside the EU as well as from and to the private sector, and the empowerment of young researchers by providing them with attractive career pathways.
- RECALLS the new digital opportunities and challenges for research, in particular, the exponential **substantial** increase of research data, and CALLS ON the Member States and the Commission for coordinated actions addressing the digital dimension of the ERA.

- HIGHLIGHTS the need to strengthen the EU as the global player while building on the **existing** successful bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Therefore INVITES **the Member States** to consider the **multiannual** roadmaps for **international** cooperation between international partner countries and regions and the EU, while taking into account possible synergies and added value of coordination and cooperation between Member States as well as choosing the optimal level of bilateral, multilateral and European cooperation with international partner countries and regions.
- 11. UNDERLINES that the ERA Roadmap 2015-2020 should mirror the possible evolution of the priority areas and actions and therefore INVITES ERAC in cooperation with the other ERA-related Groups to review it as part of the ERA progress reporting cycle. In this context, STRESSES the importance of effective and efficient ERA governance and advisory structure in order to improve the coordination and monitoring of the ERA.
